



# Tomatoes, Fresh

MyPlate Food Group: **Vegetable**



### Nutrition Information

- 1 cup of raw tomatoes counts as 1 cup from the ChooseMyPlate.gov Vegetable group.
- It all counts! Fresh, frozen, canned, and even vegetable juice- all types of veggies count toward your MyPlate goal.
- Based on their nutrient content, vegetables are organized into 5 subgroups: dark-green vegetables, starchy vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas, and other vegetables.
- Most vegetables are naturally low in fat. None have cholesterol. Sauces and seasonings may add fat, calories, and/or cholesterol.
- Tomatoes are an important source of many nutrients, including vitamins A, C, and an antioxidant called lycopene which is good for heart health and eyesight.

### Uses and Tips

- Make a fresh pasta sauce for dinner! Cut up tomatoes and cook with vegetable oil and garlic. Add fresh basil and serve over pasta.
- Add lettuce, sliced tomatoes, and sliced onions to sandwiches for extra flavor and texture.
- Tomatoes add flavor and color to any salad! You can also add fresh tomato slices as a topping for pizza instead of sauce.
- Roast tomatoes in the oven for a quick and delicious side dish for dinner.

### Storing Foods at Home

- Do not wash tomatoes until ready to eat.
- Store tomatoes at room temperature. Once cut, store tomatoes in the refrigerator in a tightly sealed container.

## MyPlate Facts

- Vegetables are naturally low in calories. Eat vegetables in place of foods that may be higher in calories to help lower calorie intake. For example, replace chips with crunchy carrots, celery, or cucumbers.
- Eating a diet rich in vegetables and fruits as part of an overall healthy diet may reduce the risk of heart disease, including heart attack and stroke.
- Eating a diet rich in some vegetables and fruits as part of an overall healthy diet may protect against certain types of cancers.
- Adding vegetables can help increase the intake of fiber and potassium, which are important nutrients that many Americans do not get enough of in their diet.
- Vary your veggie choices to keep meals interesting.



## USDA Foods

### **Crispy Tomato Bites**

*Makes 6 servings*

#### **Ingredients:**

12 slices of French bread, ½-inch slices  
¼ cup low-fat mozzarella cheese, shredded  
5 tomatoes, diced  
½ teaspoon black pepper  
8 basil leaves, chopped

**Directions:** Wash hands with soap and water.

1. Preheat oven to 300 degrees F.
2. Place thin layer of mozzarella cheese on each slice of bread.
3. Toast bread slices in oven until cheese melts, about 5 to 8 minutes.
4. Mix diced tomatoes with black pepper.
5. Place diced tomatoes on top of cheese and garnish with chopped basil leaves.
6. Serve immediately.

*Recipe adapted from EatFresh.org*

### **Tomato Pesto**

*Makes 8 servings*

#### **Ingredients:**

4 cups tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and coarsely chopped  
5 garlic cloves, minced  
30 basil leaves, fresh  
½ cup vegetable oil  
4 teaspoons balsamic vinegar  
salt and pepper, to taste  
1 cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated

**Directions:** Wash hands with soap and water.

1. Combine the tomatoes, garlic, basil, oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper in a blender and puree until smooth.
2. Add the cheese and blend briefly to combine.
3. Transfer to a bowl and adjust the seasoning.
4. Serve over baked chicken, fish, or even an omelet in the morning!

*Recipe adapted from EatFresh.org*